

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GR

SUBJECT: GREEK EMBASSY MEMORANDUM ON US SECURITY ASSISTANCE

MOSCOW FOR HARTMAN

1. JOURNALISTIC SOURCE (LESLIE FINER) HAS PROVIDED US WITH FOLLOWING "MEMORANDUM" ON US SECURITY ASSISTANCE WHICH GREEK EMBASSY HAS GIVEN CERTAIN CORRESPONDENTS AND PRESUMABLY CERTAIN MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

2. BEGIN TEXT. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT AN OUTSIDER WOULD NOT WISH TO APPEAR, EVEN REMOTELY, AS INTRUDING IN THE PRESENT DELIBERATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE ADMINISTRATION'S MILITARY-ASSISTANCE REQUESTS. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMBASSY, HOWEVER, WISHES TO UNDERLINE HOW EXTREMELY IMPOR-

TANT THOSE REQUESTS ARE, INsofar AS THEY RELATE TO GREECE, TO OUR GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH CONSTRUCTIVE FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES.

3. GREECE'S ARMED FORCES DETERIORATED QUITE BADLY DURING THE JUNTA PERIOD. OUR NEW, DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO RESTORE OUR DEFENSE CAPABILITY WITHOUT ENTIRELY TAKING BADLY NEEDED RESOURCES FROM PROGRAMS OF DOMESTIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT -- ALSO BADLY NEGLECTED DURING THE PERIOD OF

THE DICTATORSHIP.

4. NEXT YEAR'S DEFENSE BUDGET, UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE GREEK PARLIAMENT, PROVIDES FOR A 30 PER CENT INCREASE IN OUR DEFENSE EXPENDITURES. DEFENSE EXPENSES WILL THUS AMOUNT TO MORE THAN 20 PER CENT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S TOTAL EXPENDITURE. MOST OF THE INCREASED COST WILL BE MET FROM NEW TAXATION. IT CAN THEREFORE FAIRLY BE SAID THAT GREECE IS DOING ITS BEST. YET, ASSISTANCE FROM ABROAD IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE.

5. WE THUS WELCOMED THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSAL OF A ONE HUNDRED AND TEN MILLION DOLLAR FOREIGN-MILITARY-SALES CREDIT, TO ENABLE GREECE TO BUY FROM THE USA ITEMS NECESSARY FOR MODERNIZING ITS FORCES, AS WELL AS A FIFTY MILLION DOLLAR MILITARY-ASSISTANCE GRANT, EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR TRAINING, AND SIXTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLARS IN SECURITY SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE THROUGH A COMMODITY-IMPORT LOAN.

6. THIS LATTER CATEGORY -- SECURITY SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE -- IS NOT MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN ANYTHING BUT THE BROADEST SENSE. IT IS, IN FACT, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE INTENDED TO HELP ALLIES OF THE UNITED STATES ADD TO THEIR SECURITY THROUGH MEASURES WHICH WILL PROVIDE ECONOMIC STRENGTH. IN THE CASE OF GREECE, THE AMOUNT OF SIXTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLARS IS A COMMODITY-IMPORT LOAN. THE LOAN, WHICH WILL BE USED TO FINANCE MACHINERY, SPARE PARTS, EQUIPMENT AND ESSENTIAL MATERIALS, WILL BE AT 5 PER CENT AND WOULD BE REPAYED IN TWENTY-FIVE YEARS. AN EVEN LARGER LOAN COULD BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PUT TO GOOD USE. WE ARE OF COURSE SEEKING SUCH ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER SOURCES AS WELL.

7. BEYOND THE TANGIBLE NEED FOR THE ABOVE WHOLE PACKAGE OF ASSISTANCE, WE CANNOT OVEREMPHASIZE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE THIS ASSISTANCE CARRIES FOR THE GREEK PEOPLE. THERE HAVE BEEN INNUMERABLE RUMORS AND REPORTS, MANY GREATLY EXAGGERATED, CONCERNING PAST AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR

THE DICTATORSHIP. THE RESULT HAS BEEN, IN MANY SECTORS OF GREEK OPINION, A STRONG FEELING OF DISILLUSION TOWARDS AN OLD, CLOSE, AND GREAT ALLY. BEYOND THIS, THE PERCEIVED US "TILT" TOWARD TURKEY, IN THE CYPRUS CRISIS HAS FED THIS FEELING. THE CLIMATE OF OPINION HAS MADE MOST DIFFICULT THE DISPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION OF GREECE'S POLICY TOWARD NATO, TOWARD THE UNITED STATES, AND TOWARD RELATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

8. THUS THE PRESENT AID REQUEST, OUTLINED ABOVE, HAS TAKEN UNUSUAL IMPORTANCE FOR US. IT IS SEEN, RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY,

BY MANY IN GREECE AS AN INDICATION OF US INTENTION TOWARD OUR COUNTRY AND ITS NEW DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT.

9. THE EMBASSY KNOWS THE BUDGETARY, AS WELL AS SUBSTANTIVE, CONSIDERATIONS WHICH THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IN ITS CONSIDERATION OF THE PENDING LEGISLATION.

10. HOWEVER THE EMBASSY CONSIDERS IT APPROPRIATE TO PRESENT THE BACKGROUND OF CONCERN WITHIN GREECE.

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